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Addendum

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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (item 4 (b))

Section 19. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean

1. At its 23rd meeting, on 21 June 1999, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (A/54/6 (Sect. 19)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration thereof.

Discussion

3. Strong support was expressed for the programme of work under the section. The importance of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean as the only regional institution that takes a systematic approach to the examination of development issues facing Latin America and Caribbean countries was reaffirmed.

4. The view was expressed that paragraph 19.4 gave the impression that the proposed programme of work of the Commission for the biennium 2000–2001 was not based on programme 17 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001, as revised (A/53/6/Rev.1). It was stressed that the programme of work should be elaborated in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme

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Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

5. Satisfaction was expressed with the initiatives taken by the Commission in dealing with new and emerging issues in the region. Subprogrammes 5, Social development and social equity, 7, Environmental and land resource sustainability, and 12, Mainstreaming the gender perspective into regional development, were strongly supported.

6. Concern was expressed that resources had not been proposed for the implementation of activities in relation to the Central American subregion that would take into account the critical economic, social and environmental situation facing Central American countries that have recently been affected by natural disasters. It was felt that additional resources should be allocated to assessments of the socio-economic impact of natural disasters on the countries of the region.

7. Satisfaction was expressed that implementation of subprogramme 12 would be met essentially by redeployment of resources within the budget of the Commission. It was stressed that the redeployments should not have a negative impact on the releasing subprogrammes. Information was sought on the impact on the programme of work of the Commission following the incorporation of the Latin American and Caribbean Centre for Demography into the organizational structure of the Commission.

8. It was felt that the formulation of expected accomplishments required improvement, with a view to making them adequate to the objectives of the programme and measurable. The view was also expressed that the programme managers need to implement more fully the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of the Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, which require self-evaluation and identification of activities that are inefficient, ineffective or irrelevant. The view was expressed that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some activities dealing with economic and social affairs.

9. The need for the Commission to continue fostering its comparative advantages and differentiated work in relation to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank so as to avoid duplication and overlapping was stressed.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 19, Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, with the following modifications:

(a) In paragraph 19.4, the words "three fundamental" should be replaced with the words "programme 17 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001 and the following" and the phrase after the word "circumstances" should be deleted;

(b) The last sentence in paragraph 19.51 should be deleted;

(c) Paragraph 19.71 (a) should read as follows: "Support of the design and implementation of policies to strengthen domestic capacities in the macroeconomic field";

(d) The second sentence of paragraph 19.87 should be deleted.

11. The Committee noted that the implementation of this programme should be in accordance with paragraph 73, section 19, of General Assembly resolution 52/220.